

(My letter is so long I cannot read it over to correct it - so you must decipher it as well as read it)

March 27. 1868.
A. A. O. to W. A.

But here also I must say you mistake - you attribute blame to yourself without cause - Perhaps you did wrong in not telling me your true situation at the first - But do not say that you led me astray - That I have wandered far from my God and my duty I do not deny but most deeply lament - but you, yes you was not the cause of it - If ~~we~~ we have done wrong in suffering ourselves to become attached to each other the guilt is not yours more than mine. Do not then condemn yourself so much. You next say you hope the time will soon come when you shall be a Christian - O you do not hope for it you do not pray for it I am sure more sincerely than I do - This is a business of the first importance - Religion alone can support you under the trials of life - This alone can sweeten even your enjoyments - And ah this alone can secure you an entrance into heaven. Let me say to you then again give yourself no rest until you can lie as an humble child at the foot of the cross and be willing to be saved by the blood of Christ alone: and while I say this - remember it is the best wish - the most earnest desire and the yearning of a soul more deeply interested for your ~~life~~ eternal as well as temporal welfare than for that of any other mortal living.

At what follows of your letter I could almost hope for you but I dare not - How is it possible for a person in deep affliction to utter such sentiments and still be an enemy of God. But have you indeed learned to be "submissive"? Can you indeed say under all your afflictions that you can "never do too much for the Author of your existence"? Can you say in the spirit of humble submission "all things work together for good" - "all is for the best"? O Sarah Ann look to this matter and see if you can feel that you have any reason to believe yourself a Christian - I advise you if you can get them to read Pilgrims Progress & Spring's Essays - or if you cannot ^{to} read the chapters in Paley's Works on the goodness of the Deity and watch your feelings as you read it and see if your affections kindle up with love and admiration of his character? If it does see if you can look upon Christ with the same feelings and affections - And see what are your feelings when you contemplate your own character.

You next say because you fear you shall not be qualified for the important station of a minister's wife "that we had better end our connection now - not wait for some future time; now will be the time if ever". I do indeed think that now is the time if ever; but I do not mean by now the same time that you do - I mean that ~~now~~ since I am acquainted with every thing connected with you now is the time to deliberate - I cannot come to a conclusion in a moment - I have therefore a request to make - It is that you should remain in Dover until the first of May when our vacation commences. I shall then come into those parts and I wish to see you - converse with you freely & frankly consider the reasons for and against a separation and weigh them well and weigh them too with you, before I can come to any fixed conclusion. In the mean time I will watch my feelings narrowly and see if ~~my~~ my affection in the least diminishes - I will make it a subject of prayer - of deep investigation - of frequent thought - I will look at it in all its bearings and will thus with the Divine guidance ~~be~~ come to ^{the} conclusion which I trust will be most for your happiness and mine. In the mean time believe me as truly yours as ever. I wish you to remain at Dover because I can have a much better opportunity for seeing you there than I could in Boston - You must ~~not~~ therefore remain and let us consider the matter together - If you will remain until then and 5 weeks longer I will be your company to Boston - ~~It is past~~ It is $\frac{1}{2}$ past eleven which you know is my time to bid you good night.

Thursday evening March 19. I have just returned from our weekly conference - the subject considered was meekness and forgiveness - I will now occupy a few moments in finishing this long epistle. I as little thought of receiving such a letter from you a few days since as you did of writing ~~me~~ it. I am much obliged to you for stating so freely your feelings on a subject which is to us one of the greatest importance. You say you owe me much & then ask how you shall repay me & then tell me to send you off. Sarah Ann If I have befriended you - If I have done any thing to comfort you I have only done my duty - I have only discharged the office of a sincere friend - Does this lay you under such great obligations to me? Oh no. And if now after all your troubles I should add yet another by leaving you would you then owe me any thing? Set what may come if I am the means of making you happy here and hereafter I shall indeed look upon my acquaintance with you as one of the happiest events of my life; but even if this is the result it does not lay you under such mighty obligations - I have only followed the dictates of a tender heart - I have only done my duty. - I could not, no I could not say, yes, to the question which followed. - As to my books &c keep them with you I do not leave them with any one - I trust you have not given them to Fisks; as if we had already separated. I did not "wipe a tear gently falling" as you imagined I should when I read ~~the~~ your letter - no they came in torrents - I could but weep most bitterly - not for myself but for you - Could I, ~~the~~ ^{which} see the emotion with ^{which} you must have penned that letter without a corresponding sympathy - you know is one of sympathy - It feels for other's woes as for its own.

I would now exhort you in conclusion not to give way to any melancholy reflections on this subject - be calm - let us rest the event with God and if we ever separate let it be not as those who shall never see each other again but as those who shall meet often as friends - as sincere friends though we should give up the idea of a closer union - I here repeat to you again ~~what I have~~ that I take a deep interest in your happiness - It lies near my heart - I love you and nothing shall keep me from doing all in my power to make you happy. You know I am a friend - a real friend and may Heaven grant that I may never lose in the least my regard for you - I have lately received a letter from Mr Weeks in which he says "that son of Perdition" has again thrown out his suggestions. I will bring the letter and show it to you in 3 days if you will remain in Dover till then - which you must do. You may think Weeks unfriendly to you - but I do think him a real friend to you and me both. I have one more suggestion - I know your proneness to melancholy - Therefore let every moment otherwise unoccupied, be spent in reading & I have tried the ~~same~~ prescription when I was in college many times and I always found it a remedy - Go thou and do likewise. I shall send you a paper at the same time with this letter. I shall send the ~~pamphlet~~ ^{pamphlets} to Weeks and let him send them to you from B - if on the whole I think best. By the way there is a good piece in the spirit of the Pilgrims on the subject of revivals for you to read - see if you have experienced any thing of the kind. Write me soon very soon and tell me if you conclude to remain at Dover - Write me your whole soul - tell me how you feel - tell me how you feel from day to day. I long to see you again. Yours sincerely & affectionately A. A. Phelps.

I have to day received my copy of the subject of the Pilgrims. I shall probably also have an agency for the spirit of the Pilgrims. I am much engaged during my relaxing hours away with your doctrine of unworthiness I don't mission to get subscribers for the Abstract, next spring in York & Pilgrims. I am much engaged during my relaxing hours

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Miss Sarah A. Haggens
Dover - N. Hampshire
Care of Barnabas H. Palmer

Ms. A. 9. 2. 12. 12.

March 27 - 1878

Write me your feelings on the subject of religion also without reserve. I am not sure that I shall not in some way
or other devote my life to the cause of the African - I do not think of ever going to Africa - but I intend if possible
to do so. It is a noble and noble work. I have not